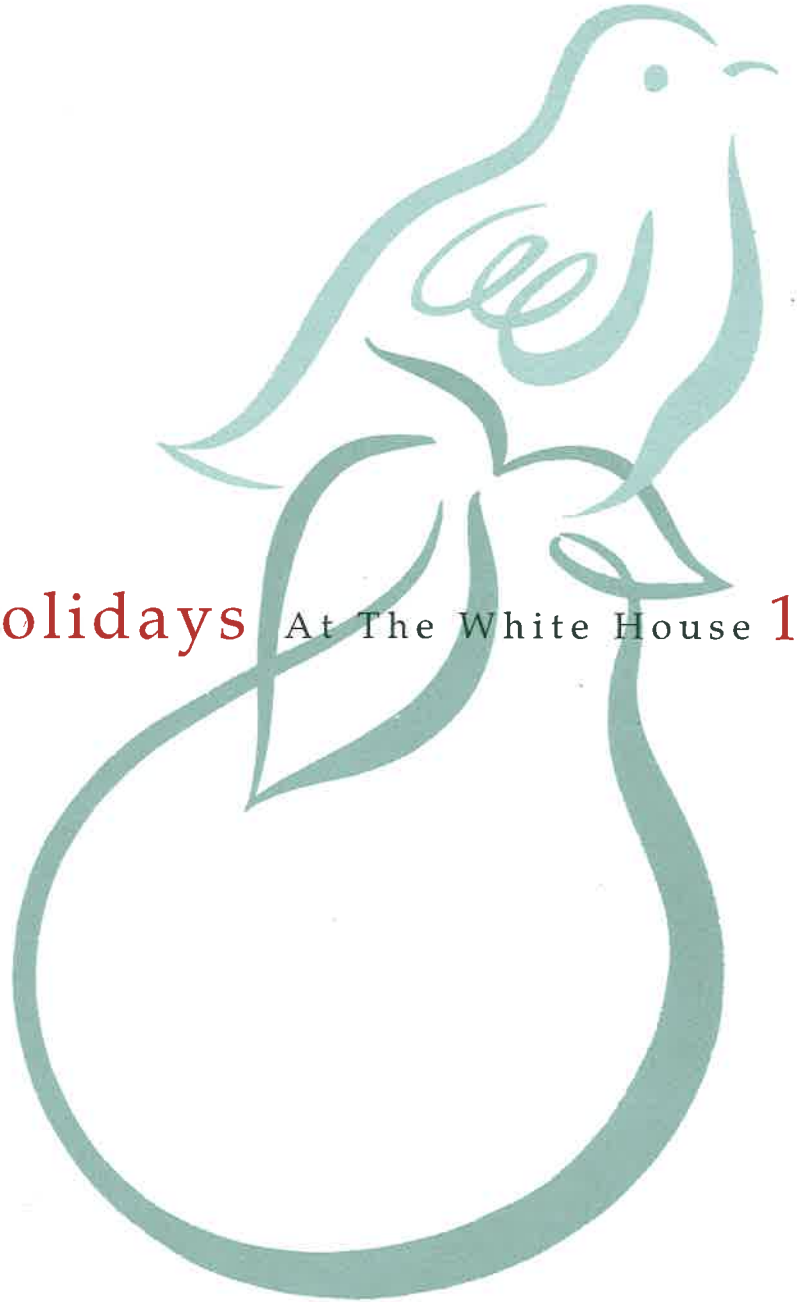


Holidays At The White House 1994

two turtle doves

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Dear Friends:

We are delighted to have you join us during this holiday season at the White House.

In our family, Christmas has always been a time to give thanks and to open our home and our hearts. We truly enjoy celebrating the many blessings of America, and it means a great deal to us that you have chosen to visit the White House—the people's home—during this holiday season.

This year we have decorated the White House with ornaments designed by talented students from across the country. Their work reflects their interpretations of the holiday. These young artists offer fresh perspectives on the traditional and timeless lessons of the season.

May you and your family have a loving and peaceful holiday and joy throughout the year.

Bill Clinton Hillary Rodham Clinton

a partridge in a pear tree

two turtle doves three french hens

four calling birds

five golden rings six geese a-laying

seven swans a-swimming

eight maids a-milking nine ladies dancing

ten lords a-leaping

eleven pipers piping

twelve drummers drumming



interpretations of tradition

As part of the 1994 holiday celebrations at the White House, the President and Mrs. Clinton wished to express their enthusiasm for the arts in American life and education.

The First Family sent requests to design and art schools in every part of the country, asking students to create ornaments reflecting their personal interpretations of the traditional and time-honored carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

The ornaments are showcased on the Blue Room Tree. One of the traditions of the Clinton White House is that this special tree is decorated by a different group of Americans each year.

Students designed the ornaments in any way their imaginations and talents could take them. We asked only that they remain true to the spirit of the original carol.

To everyone's delight, the ornaments came in as many shapes and sizes as there were students. Each is a testament to the developing talent and artistry of the next generation.

the east entrance children's tree

As you enter the White House through the EAST WING entrance, you approach the first of our special holiday trees, the Children's Tree, which stands in the EAST GARDEN ROOM. The tree is decorated with 350 ornaments made by children who attend Blue Ribbon Schools. Each school was asked to contribute two ornaments. Sponsored by the United States Department of Education, the Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes and supports primary and secondary schools that are noted for their exceptional arts education, as well as their effectiveness in meeting the National Education Goals.

As you continue past the EAST GARDEN ROOM, you walk along the EAST COLONNADE, where oversized wreaths are hung in each window. Just outside the windows is the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden where an exhibit of twentieth century American sculpture is on view. At the end of the Colonnade is the EAST FOYER. Here, a tree decorated with 200 hand-crafted angels from the 1993 holiday celebration is on display. Also in the East Foyer is a retrospective exhibit of official White House Christmas cards, dating from the Eisenhower era to the present, including the original painting by Thomas McKnight of this year's card, entitled "White House Christmas."







the ground floor corridor

As you walk through the GROUND FLOOR CORRIDOR, you will notice that white poinsettias are everywhere, giving the Corridor a light and airy feeling. Red bows tied to the chandeliers continue the traditional holiday theme.

To the left is the DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION ROOM where visiting dignitaries are welcomed. The fireplace is accented by two decorated trees, featuring ornaments from both the art schools and universities, and ornaments contributed by the National Society of Tole and Decorative Painters, Inc. The Society members number 30,000, representing every state in the Union, and 28 foreign countries. Decorations reflect the Twelve Days of Christmas.

the east room

In THE EAST ROOM, the traditional White House creche is a focal point. This beautiful antique creche was made in Naples, Italy in the late 18th century, and features 47 carved wood and terra cotta figures. The creche was a gift to the White House from Mrs. Charles Englehard Jr. of Far Hills, New Jersey, and has been on display each year since it was presented in 1967.

On either side of the creche, at the center windows, and flanking the hallway entrance, six trees ranging in size from 12-feet to 20-feet are decorated with gold hydrangea blossoms, and burgundy and gold ribbons. Mixed greenery and hydrangeas grace the mantels of the four fireplaces; and musical groups from across the country send the sounds of the holidays throughout the room.



the parlors

The GREEN ROOM is used as a parlor for small teas, receptions and meetings. On the east wall, above the fireplace, hangs the renowned portrait of Benjamin Franklin by David Martin. Holiday topiaries are festooned with greens and mauve flowers. The fireplace mantel is decorated with greenery, pine cones and mauve ribbon.

In the BLUE ROOM, stands the official White House tree. This year the 18-1/2 foot Colorado blue spruce comes from "Santa's Forest" near Holt, in Clinton County, Missouri. The tree was presented to the President and Mrs. Clinton by "Schmitt Tree Farms," owned by Louis W., Lynn, Louis E., and Myron Schmitt, who won the honor by being named 1994 National Grand Champion Growers by the National Christmas Tree Association. The decorations on the tree show the convergence of arts and education with ornaments contributed by the art schools and universities, the Blue Ribbon Schools, and the National Society of Tole and Decorative Painters. The green velvet handmade tree skirt was designed by individual artisans from each of the 50 states, territories and the District of Columbia.

The RED ROOM is furnished in the elegant American Empire style of the early 19th century. It is decorated with holly and greenery, reflecting the spirit of the season. As is traditional at the White House, a small cranberry tree is placed on the circular gueridon table. This year, also, the Red Room was used as the setting for the official White House Christmas card.

the state dining room and gingerbread house

Foreign dignitaries and heads of state are entertained in the STATE DINING ROOM. In honor of the holidays, the famous George P.A. Healy portrait of Abraham Lincoln above the mantel is draped with a garland of greenery, and burgundy and gold ribbons. Mixed greenery decorates the sconces, and burgundy ribbons are tied in the chandeliers.

One of the most charming features of the State Dining Room, and a favorite of adults and children alike, is the GINGERBREAD HOUSE. This year, the gingerbread house will hold a special place in the hearts of the First Family. It is a replica of the President's childhood home in Hope, Arkansas. Every detail of the home has been recreated, right down to the sloping roof of the front porch, and the green shutters.

The house is decorated for the holidays, complete with family Christmas tree, wreaths in the windows, and a visit from Santa Claus. And don't forget to look for the President's first dog, peeking out from one of the windows. Created by the White House Pastry staff, the gingerbread house uses 50 to 60 pounds of gingerbread, as well as marzipan, chocolate and frosting.







the entrance hall

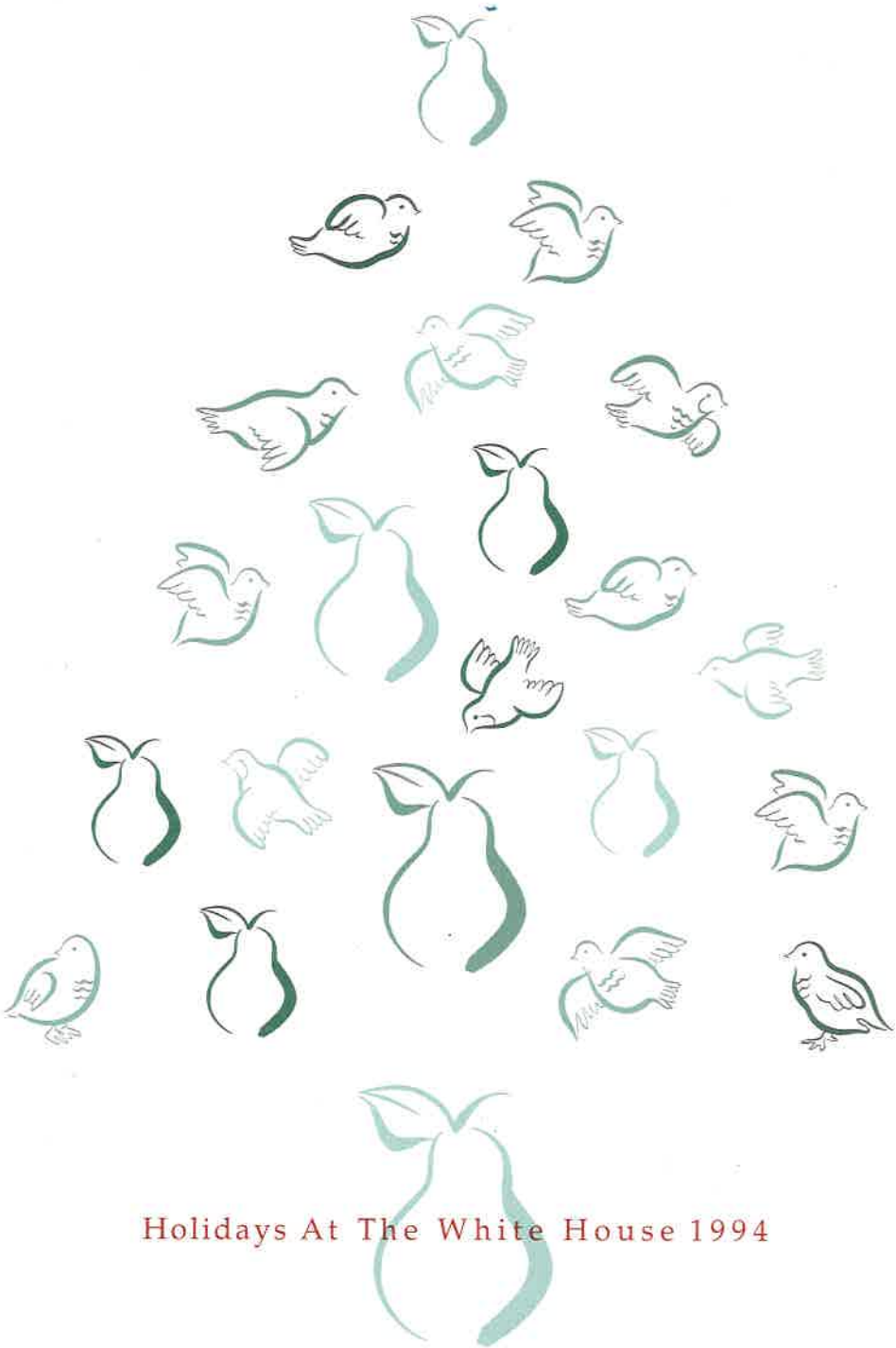
As you enter the ENTRANCE HALL, you will be struck by the grandeur of the four large trees that flank the front door and stand between the columns. Each is decorated with gold baby's breath, gold glass pine cones, and burgundy velvet ribbons. A traditional "kissing ball" of boxwood and mistletoe hangs down from the ceiling between the columns.

Along the railing of the GRAND STAIRCASE, and around the doors to the EAST ROOM and the STATE DINING ROOM, garlands of mixed greenery are draped and tied with burgundy and gold ribbons. Outside, on the NORTH PORTICO, the early 20th century lantern is decked with greenery and red ribbons. On either side of the doors, two blue spruces are trimmed with miniature white lights.

The first president to decorate the White House tree with electric lights was Grover Cleveland. The last tree to be lit by candlelight was the tree decorated by Eleanor Roosevelt.



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